The Reality Of Shar'i Veiling

Foreword

All praise is due only to Allaah. We laud Him and beseech His aid and beg forgiveness only from Him and believe in Him and rely solely on Him. We seek salvation in Him from the evils of our inner selves and the vices of our actions. There is none to misguide one whom Allaah intends to guide. I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship but Allaah, the One who has no partner. I also testify that Hadhrat Muhammad ρ is the faithful servant and the Last Rasul of Allaah. May Allaah Ta'ala's mercy be on him, his family and his Sahabaah τ and may He bless them and raise their status.

The learned author has written about:

1.) The need, importance and reason for purdah.
2.) Defined Marham and non Mahram with examples in detail.
3.) What part of the body can the male and female expose, when, why, how and under what circumstances.
4.) Laws to be observed when going out, on journey, for Hajj, to a Doctor, to Madressah, to an Amil, for education, to the graveyard, on death, on leaving the home, voice and clothing.
5.) Who can see what and when?
6.) Age of maturity for boy/girl.
7.) How to implement it and the importance of marriage are explained.

This booklet is extremely beneficial to know and learn the basic principles and laws of purdah.

May Allaah Jalla Majdahu reward all.

A.H.Elias (Mufti)
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In the name of Allaah the Beneficent the Merciful
Hadhrat Moulana Mufti Ateequr-Rahman

The need for purdah:

It should clearly be borne in mind that Allaah has made adultery forbidden, therefore all such acts leading to adultery are also forbidden. Amongst these acts the lack of purdah and evil glances are fundamental. Allaah has created carnal desires within both man and women. When these desires erupt, it is difficult and sometimes almost impossible to control these desires. To be protected from the destructive results of these desires it is essential to maintain purdah, protect the gaze and abstain from inter mingling of the sexes. Evil creeps into society when there is apathy shown towards purdah and the inter mingling of males and females becomes common. The destructive effect of the non observance of purdah completely destroys a person spiritually. Therefore the pure shariah has placed certain beneficial laws of purdah to save one from falling into the pit of such destruction. The objectives of these laws are to protect man and women from immodesty, evil glances and those destructive and corrupt actions which are a result of such behavior.

Natural desires and temptations are inherently found in human beings, and these cannot be separated from them. How is it possible, that bread be placed in front of a hungry dog, and then hope that the thought of not having the bread would not cross its mind? It is for this very reason that shariah has instructed women to observe purdah. Or else, no woman's honor would be safe. (Almasawlihul aqliyah lil ahkaamin naqliyah *pg.375*)

Before explaining the laws regarding purdah, it is essential to understand the difference between *mahram* and *ghair mahram,* so that we can easily understand the coming discussions where these words are repeatedly used.

The principle of purdah:

It is not necessary for a woman to observe purdah from those relatives who are her mahram, and it is necessary for a woman to observe purdah from those who are her ghair mahram. **The basic principle is this, that man, whom a woman can never marry by (shar'i) law or in other words she is always haraam on such a man, will be her mahram.** She will not have to observe purdah from such men. **All those men, whom she can at any point marry, will be termed as her ghair mahram and it is necessary for her to observe purdah from all such men.** A short list of all those relatives who are mahram and purdah from such is not necessary, and all those who are ghair mahram and purdah from them is necessary is given bellow.

Those from whom purdah is necessary:

1. Maternal and paternal (male) cousins.
2. Husbands brothers.
3. Sister’s husbands.
4. Husband of the husband’s sister.
5. Husband of mother’s sister.
6. Husband of father’s sister.
7. Paternal and maternal uncles of the husband.
8. Husband of fathers in law and mothers in law sister.
9. Husbands nephews.
10. Similarly it is necessary for a woman to observe complete purdah from all those men whom she can at any point marry.

Those from whom purdah is not necessary:

1. Husband, (but if the husband divorces her, he will become a ghair mahram and purdah from him will be necessary).
2. Father.
3. Paternal and maternal grand father.
4. Paternal and maternal uncles.
5. Father in law.
6. Son.
7. Grandson.
8. Husband’s son (from another wife).
9. Son in law.
10. Brother.
11. Brothers who share the same mother/father.
12. Nephews.
13. All those to whom marriage at any point is forbidden.
14. Similarly a man who has no knowledge of women and a boy (bellow the age of 10) who has not reached close to puberty and is not aware of the (sexual) details of women. Nevertheless, such a lad who is inclined to such details of women or is close to the age of puberty will not fall under this category. (Ibn Kathir *vol.6 pg.405* with reference from Ma’ariful Quraan.)

In the 23rd verse of Surah Nisaa Allaah has listed all those women to whom marriage is not permissible, i.e. all those who are mahram.

1. Mother (both maternal and paternal grand mothers are included here).
2. Daughter (all grand daughters will be included here)
3. Sisters.
4. Paternal aunt.
5. Maternal aunt.
6. Brother’s daughters.
7. Sister’s daughters.
8. Foster mother.
9. Foster sister (all other female foster relations will be included here, e.g. foster niece, foster aunts etc.)
10. Mother in law.

11. Wife's daughter (a daughter from a previous marriage), on condition that one has consummated the marriage, if one has married a woman, but prior to consummating the marriage the woman passes away or he divorces her, then her daughter will not be haraam. (Marriage to her daughter will be permissible.)
12. Daughter in law.
13. To combine two sisters in marriage at one and the same time. The sister in law will remain haraam (on one) so long as her sister is still married to him. After the wife dies, marriage to the sister in law is permissible. The point here is that the sister is not haraam permanently. One other category of women has been mentioned in verse 22, the step mother.

In total these are 13 types of women to whom marriage at no point in time will ever be permissible.

It is the conclusive decision of Islaam and intelligence that purdah will not be observed from those who are permanently haraam, and at no given time will it be permissible to marry such woman. All those women whom at some time or the other there is hope or possibility of marriage to, purdah will have to be observed from them. E.g. Wife's sister, wife of father's brother, paternal uncle's wife, wife of mother's brother, brother's wife etc. Purdah from all these will be compulsory, and they are from the ghair mahram. Therefore, understand very well that it is permissible to marry any woman other than the 13 types which the Quraan has stipulated as permanently haraam.

After mentioning the details of the women permanently haraam on a man, Allaah says, "And besides these, all other women are permissible." (Surah Nisaa verse 24) In other words all other women are ghair mahram and purdah will have to be maintained.

How much of the body could be exposed in the presence of mahram men?

From the above mentioned categories of people, husband and wife may expose or touch all parts of the body with or without lust to one another. Besides the husband, a woman **may expose her face, head, neck, forearms, and all parts bellow the knee, to all other mahram men** e.g. father, brother, nephew, son etc. for instance at the time of scrubbing the floor she may lift her trouser or while kneading dough she may lift her sleeves in the presence of such men. Mahram men may even look or touch these parts of a woman without lust. If there is any fear of evil then it will not be permissible to expose these parts in front of such mahram. Any mahram who is immodest and has no care for the dignity (of a woman) will fall under the category of ghair mahram and it will be compulsory to observe purdah from such a person.

Those parts of the body which may be exposed in the presence of mahram will also serve as the limit to which a woman may expose to another woman. It is permissible for a woman to expose from bellow her knees and above her chest, head, forearms, face, hands etc. in the presence of another woman (should these become exposed.) **Though, it will not be permissible for a woman to expose her stomach or back to another woman.**

It is not permissible for a male to expose any part from his navel to bellow his knee to another male. Similarly it is not permissible for one male to look at any part of another male between the navel and the knee. (Extracted from Hidaayah *vol.4 pg.106*)

Ruling:

“Those parts, from which purdah of the gaze is observed, will also not be permissible to be touched.”

A woman who is so old that none can be inclined to her nor does she have the ability to marry, for such a woman there is laxity in as far as so much in the laws of purdah, that a ghair mahram will be in the same ruling as a mahram. Though, there remains a restriction in as far as exposing those parts to a ghair mahram which she may expose to a mahram, on condition that she does so without adorning herself. Nevertheless, if she abstains altogether from coming in the presence of ghair mahram men, this is best for her.

It is reported from Abdullah Ibn Abbaas r.a that a woman who has reached an advanced age may remove her veil and cascade, and may wear just a two fold scarf, dress and pants. (Taken from the book; The clothing of women and laws of purdah, by Mufti Muhammed Kamaal-uddeen Ahmed Rashidi.)

The benefits of observing purdah, and harms of not observing purdah:

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Masood r.a reports that he heard Rasulullaah s.a.w saying, “The gaze is an arrow from the poison tipped arrows of shaytan. Whosoever will turn his gaze away (from that which is not permissible to look at) even though his heart desires to, (look at it) Allaah will grant him such firm Imaan, the sweetness of which he will perceive in his heart.” (Ibn Kathir)

Is it reported in Saheeh Muslim from Hadhrat Jareer Ibn Abdullah Albajali r.a that he asked Rasulullaah s.a.w, “What should one do if his gaze unintentionally falls onto a ghair mahram woman?” Nabi s.a.w said, “One should turn his gaze away.” (Ibn Kathir)

That which has been reported from Ali r.a, that the first gaze is pardonable, and the second is a sin also refers to the first gaze that unintentionally fell, since this was unintentional, it is pardonable. Whereas the first gaze which is cast intentionally will not be pardoned. (Thirmizi)

Nabi s.a.w has said, “Allaah has instructed, O son of Aadam! To cast your gaze unintentionally the first time is pardonable, but beware of casting a second glance as this will result in your destruction.” (Taken from, The harms of wasting youth. Arsalaan Ibn Akhtar Memon)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi r.a explaining the severity and harm of the sickness of the evil glance and ill usage of the eyes by looking at ghair mahram women with lust

says, “This is such an evil, that its effect obscures all the effulgence of obedience (acts of worship).” (Anfaas-e-Eesa *pg.143*)

Mufti Taqi Uthmani d.b states in his booklet on evil glances and its cure, that the day in which a person involves himself in the sin of casting an evil glance, the obedience (acts of worship) carried out on that day will lack effulgence and he will be deprived of the worldly benefits of those good deeds.

Nabi s.a.w is reported to have said, “The curse of Allaah be on the person who casts an evil glance, and the curse of Allaah be on the person who presents their beauty for others to look at!” (Mishkat *pg.270*)

(Those who fear the curse of the friends of Allaah should fear the curse of the leaders of the friends of Allaah!)

Had the sin of casting an evil glance been a trivial thing, the king of both worlds s.a.w who was a mercy unto mankind, would never have cursed the one guilty of this sin. Nabi’s s.a.w cursing is a proof that this is something abhorred. The meaning of being cursed is to be distanced from the mercy of Allaah.

Imam Raghib Asfahaani has written in Mufradaatul Quraan that **the meaning of being cursed is to be distanced from the mercy of Allah.** Therefore anyone who is deprived of the mercy of Allaah will never be safe from the evil of the *nafs* (carnal desires), since only that person will be saved from the evil of the nafs is in the shade of the mercy of Allaah.

Nabi s.a.w has said, “The evil glance is the adultery of the eyes.” (Bukhari and Muslim)

Nabi s.a.w has said, “On the day of judgment, every eye will cry (in regret) accept that eye which was saved from evil glances, that eye which remained awake in the path of Allaah, and that eye which shed a tear equivalent to the head of a fly out of the fear of Allaah.” (Narrated by Asbahaani)

A person whilst walking was looking at a woman. Ahead was a wall which he knocked into and as a result broke his nose. He said, “I swear by Allaah I will not wash the blood off, until I inform Rasulullaah s.a.w of my incident!” By and by he reports to Rasulullaah s.a.w and informs him of his incident. Nabi s.a.w told him that this was the punishment for his sin. (Durre manthoor, Roohul ma’aani)

Just as it is incumbent upon men to abstain from looking at ghair mahram women, women have been instructed to abstain from looking at ghair mahram men. (Extracted from the narrations of Aeysha r.a and Umme Salamah r.a recorded in Thirmizi and Abu Dawud)

An important clarification here is that if a woman is absolutely convinced that by looking at a strange man her desires will not be aroused, then it will be permissible for her to look. If she is convinced or fears or even doubts that her desires might be aroused, then it will not be permissible for her to look. (Mariful Quraan *vol.6 pg.400*)

The first spiritual mentor of Moulana Hakeem Muhammed Akhtar sahib d.b, Hadhrat Shah Abdul Ghani Poolpuri r.a used to say. When a fire is lit near a lush tree, the fresh leaves on this tree die. It is with great difficulty that these leaves regain their freshness. After watering it and giving it fertilizer for an entire year, perhaps it will regain some life. Similar is the case of the remembrance of Allaah and his worship and sitting in the company of the pious, these create a light in the heart. By casting a single evil glance the entire inside (spirituality) of a person is lost. It takes a long time before the sweetness of Imaan and the light of the remembrance of Allaah is restored. The darkness created by the evil glance is very difficult to remove. Life is restored to the Imaan after much turning (to Allaah), repentance, submitting oneself (to Allaah) and repeatedly protecting the gaze.

Allama Ibn Kathir r.a writes that many of the predecessors used to be firm on preventing from looking at even a youngster whose beard has not yet begun to grow. Many Ulama even went to the extent of saying it is haraam to look at such boys. (Perhaps this is when there are evil intentions and when the gaze is cast with lust.) – Allaah knows best. (Mariful Quraan *vol.6*)

Mufti Rashid Ahmed writes on pg.24 of his famous book "Shar'i Purdah", "I go on advising that when a person comes out into the public and a desire is created to look at something impermissible, yet he restrains himself fearing Allaah, for such a person is such a lofty status and he gains such proximity unto Allaah, which cannot be acquired through thousands of years of optional prayer. When one is able to acquire such a lofty position by abstaining from a single sin and by restraining himself from the desire to sin, why shouldn't he then be concerned to attain this?"

Abu Nuaim Asfahaani has related a hadith in Hulyatul Auliya, "Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik r.a narrates that Nabi s.a.w addressed the Sahaba r.a saying, '"Tell me, what is the best thing for a woman?"' We had never of an answer to such a question. Hadhrat Ali r.a stood up from there and went to Fatima r.a. He then asked her the same question. **Hadhrat Fatima r.a said, '"Why didn't you people answer thus, that the best thing for a woman is that she should not look at strange men, nor should they ever see her."'** Hadhrat Ali r.a came back and relayed this answer to Nabi s.a.w. Nabi s.a.w then asked, '"Who gave you this answer?'" He said, Fatima r.a. (Nabi s.a.w) then said, '"Well, after all isn't she a piece of my flesh?"' (Hulyatul Auliya *vol.2 pg.40, 41*)

Hafiz Shamsuddeen Zahabi relates the following hadith in his book Alkabaair, the crux of which is as follows. Hadhrat Ali r.a And Hadhrat Fatima r.a once went to visit Rasulullaah s.a.w. Hadhrat Ali r.a says that upon reaching Rasulullaah s.a.w we found him in a grieving condition. On seeing Nabi s.a.w in this condition I said, "May my parents be sacrificed for you. Why are you crying so profusely?" Nabi s.a.w answered thus, "On the night of mi'raj I witnessed the women of my Ummat being given various forms of punishment in Jahannam. Such was the severity and horror of the punishment being given to them, that the vivid picture of it is causing me to cry!" Nabi s.a.w thereafter explained what types of punishment was being given to the women in Jahannam. He said, "I saw a woman hanging from her hair in Jahannam, and her brains were boiling the way (something would boil in a) pot!"

(To be in Jahannam in itself is a punishment which is horrifying, then to be hanging from the hair is absolutely painful, then for the brains to be boiling, this is a third punishment. May Allaah protect us all, amen.) Thereafter Nabi s.a.w gave details of the punishment given to five other women. (For details one may refer to Mufti Abdur-Rauf Sakarwi's booklet, "Six sinful women") Hadhrat Fatima r.a then asked, "O my father, due to what actions of theirs were they being given this dreadful punishment?" What actions of theirs caused Nabi s.a.w to see them in this dreadful and painful punishment? Nabi s.a.w answered thus, **"The woman whom I had seen hanging from her hair and her brains were boiling like (something that boils in) a pot, was being given this punishment because she used to leave the home with her head uncovered, and never concealed her hair from ghair mahram men.**

That woman who beautifies herself by applying make-up etc. and leaves the home with the intention that men should see her and she should see them, and those men who have the desire in their hearts to see such women, as a result this woman became a means of men casting evil glances, such a woman will have the burden of a sin equivalent to all those men who cast evil glances because of her.

It has been reported in a Hadith that one should lower his gaze and protect his private parts. For, the face of one who does not do so will lose its effulgence. (Tabrani)

One other harm of not protecting the gaze is that even though ones wife might be absolutely beautiful, he will not find her to be so. Therefore, it is a great deception of shaytan that he makes other women appear to be beautiful to a man and makes the man's wife appear to be bad looking, so that husband and wife may quarrel. The saying is famous, "Homebred chicken are as good as *daal.* (pulse)" (An Indian dish)

The only cure for this malady is that one strictly protect his/her physical eye and the eye of his/her heart so that pleasure is not even perceived by the thought of a beautiful woman/man.

It is necessary to turn the gaze away from a mahram when there is a fear of lust being created. What is meant here is that when looking at a mahram woman, if there is fear that the inner sexual desires will be spurred, then at such a time it is compulsory upon a man not to look at even a mahram woman and rather protect his gaze.

(A translation of) a few couplets of moulana Muhammed Hakeem Akhtar is given bellow regarding protecting the gaze.

You roam around like fools, O temporary lovers!
The nights and days of this era have become restless!

If you wish to live peacefully, listen well to what I have to say,
Do not fix your gaze to the gaze of beautiful (women).

Listen to this single piece of advice from Akhtar,
Do not attach your heart to these dead beauties!

Veiling of the mind:

Just as it is impermissible to look, listen to the voice or speak to a ghair mahram woman, it is also impermissible to fantasize over her and take pleasure from it. This is considered as adultery of the heart. **Nevertheless, without any evil intended it is permissible to talk within necessity to a ghair mahram.**

NB. To imagine having intercourse with a strange woman at the time of engaging in intercourse with ones own wife will make this permissible intercourse (with the wife) impermissible! The reason for this is that although he is not physically engaged in intercourse with a ghair mahram, but he is engaged in it with the mind/thought.

Non veiling is open defiance of deen:

Non veiling is an open sin. In other words open defiance. Nabi s.a.w has mentioned; **"My entire ummat is worthy of forgiveness, but an open sinner is not worthy of forgiveness."**

A shameless person will not enter Jannah:

It has been narrated directly from Hadhrat Ammaar Ibn Yassir r.a that Rasulullaah s.a.w said; "Three people will not enter Jannah, 1. A person who is shameless. 2. Women who imitate men in appearance. 3. A habitual drinker." The Sahaba r.a asked, "Who is a shameless person?" Nabi s.a.w replied, "That person who does not bother as to who visits his wife/women of his home." (Tabrani)

On one occasion Hadhrat Saad Ibn Ubaadah r.a said that if he were to find his wife with a ghair mahram man, he would kill her with his sword!

Nabi s.a.w addressed the Sahaba r.a, "O my companions! Are you surprised at the self esteem/awe of Saad r.a? Listen well, I have more awe than Saad r.a and Allaah has more awe than me. (Mishkat)

The code of a woman coming into the open:

The most influential thing to attract a man to a woman or vice versa is the gaze.
The Quraan has instructed both parties to lower their gazes. In the 4th ruku of Surah Noor the men are firstly instructed, "Tell the believing men that they should lower their gazes and protect their private parts. This is more pure for them. Verily Allaah knows well what man is doing."

The women are then addressed thus, "Tell the believing women that they should lower their gaze and protect their private parts. They should not expose their beauty accept where necessary. Their headgear should always overlap their chests, and they should never expose their beauty to any male. (Accept a Shar'i mahram.) O Muslims (those of you who have erred in this regard) should all turn in repentance to Allaah so that you maybe successful. (Surah Noor V.31)

Allaah orders the women of the ummat in the 33rd verse of Surah Ahzaab thus, “And remain within your homes, and do not roam around (unveiled) like in the days of ignorance.”

Moulana Shabir Ahmed Uthmani r.a commenting on this verse writes, “During the days of ignorance the women used to leave their homes unveiled, openly exposing the beauty of their bodies and clothes. The pristine deen of Islaam would never accept such evil manners and immodesty. It has therefore instructed women to remain indoors and not come outdoors like in the days of ignorance exposing their beauty.”

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Omar r.a narrates that Nabi s.a.w said, “A women is that which should be concealed. Verily when she leaves the home shaytan begins to look at her. It is a forgone conclusion that a woman gains most proximity unto Allaah when she remains in the confines of her home. (Athargheeb watharheeb 1626)

Commentary:

Firstly the status of a woman is shown in this hadith whereby it is said that she a being which has to be kept concealed. **A woman simply being a woman should remain indoors.** That woman who comes out into the open has in reality stepped out of the boundaries of femininity. Thereafter (the hadith) mentions that when a woman comes out of the house shaytan begins to look at her. The meaning of this is that when she comes out, shaytan makes an effort that people (men) begin to look at her adornments, figure, beauty and clothing with lustful relish. **(The hadith) goes on to say that a woman is closest to Allaah when she is indoors.** Those women who desire the closeness of Allaah will love to remain indoors and as far as possible abstain from coming into the open.

Islaam has encouraged women to remain indoors. Permission that has been granted to leave the home out of necessity has conditions attached to it. E.g. A woman has been instructed not to apply perfume when leaving the house. A woman is advised to walk on the side of the road and not the middle. A woman should not enter a place crowded by men. Should a woman have to leave the home, she should do so covering her entire body with such cloth that is course and leave that much open for her to be able to see the road. She may wear a headgear with a netted portion at the eyes or such a cloth which covers her head and hair and from the nose going down. Only the two eyes should be left open so that she is able to see the road. These days the type of cloth used by young girls for namesake is too fine and tight fitting. This can never be termed as shar’i veiling. Coming out wearing such type of clothing is as good as coming out unveiled and is absolutely impermissible. The type of clothing referred to by the Quraan is by no means this type. When a woman leaves the home due to some necessity, she should not wear such jewelry that gives off sounds. **When she speaks to a ghair mahram out of necessity, she should be precisely to the point.** She should answer with a simple yes or no and keep the conversation short. She should not talk in a sweet and seductive manner. Just as the heart is attracted by the appearance and walk (of a woman), the manner in which a woman speaks can also have a magnetic effect. The voice of women is soft by nature and their tone on the voice is heart captivating. A woman with a clean heart will force herself to adopt a rough tone when speaking to a ghair mahram. In the words of Mufti Rashid Ahmed

sahib, “She should by force speak in such a tone, that the listener thinks that this is the voice of a low person!” (Refer to Shar’i purdah.) In this the heart of one with evil intentions will not be inclined to her. A woman should never travel with a ghair mahram, and the mahram too should be one that she can trust. To travel with a mahram who is an open sinner and cannot be trusted is not correct. Similarly besides the husband and mahram, there is no permission to remain in seclusion or spend the night alone with a ghair mahram. Again, the mahram should be one that can be trusted. All these laws are actually there for the protection of ones honor and dignity.

To leave the home without the husband’s permission is not permissible.

Another etiquette for woman when leaving the home is that she should not do so without the permission of her husband.

It has been reported by Hadhrat Muaaz r.a that Nabi s.a.w said, “Any woman who believes in Allaah and the Day of Judgment should not allow anyone into the home without the permission of her husband. She should also not leave the home against his wish. She cannot obey anyone in this regard. (Mustadrak-e-Haakim)

The fact of the matter is that seeking permission from the husband when leaving the home is an aid for a woman to remain pure and chaste. Those women who go about wherever they wish without permission from the husband and in the absence of the husband allow whomsoever they wish into the home, slowly but surely through the passage of time the character of such women is spoiled. Such a woman gets bogged in sin.

It has been reported by Hadhrat Anas r.a that Nabi s.a.w said, **“That woman who leaves the home without permission from her husband is under the wrath of Allaah until she returns or (until such time that) her husband is pleased with her.”** (Kanzul-Ummaal)

A woman applying perfume and going outdoors:

A woman who applies perfume with strong scent on her headgear or inner clothing and goes outdoors is so detested by deen, that the Rasul of Allaah s.a.w has called such a woman an adulterous. (Nisaai) **The use of such perfume which does not give of a strong scent is permissible.** Since a woman should only come close up with her husband, her using a lightly scented perfume is sufficient for her husband to smell. When there is no need for anybody other than the husband to smell the perfume, there is no need to use a strong scented perfume. Perfume, and more especially when worn by a woman, has a strong influence in arousing the desires.

A woman should not embark on long distance journeys without a mahram:

For the protection of the name and respect of a woman, shariah has instructed her not to travel long distances alone, rather she should travel with a mahram. In this way she will be protected from evil. The mahram should be one who can be trusted. To travel with a mahram who is an open sinner is not correct, for such a mahram is in the category of a ghair mahram.

Hadhrat Abu Saeed Khudri r.a narrates that Rasulullaah s.a.w said, “That woman who believes in Allaah and the Day of Judgment should not travel the distance of three days journey or more without her father, brother, husband, son, or any other mahram. (Abu-Dawud, Thirmizi, Ibn Majah)

The distance of three days refers to that distance by which performance of qasr becomes permissible. For a woman to leave the home and travel within the limits of (the same) town/city with a mahram is better, but it is not compulsory. In a similar manner if the distance she is traveling is less than 48 miles (77 kms) then there is no need for a mahram to accompany her on condition there is no fear of her being involved in evil by traveling alone. **When there is fear of getting involved in evil she should avoid traveling alone.** A woman who intends traveling a distance further than 48 miles (77 kms) e.g. from Karachi to Haidrabad or to Sakhar or Lahore, or she intends embarking on hajj, then together with the other conditions, she will have to be accompanied by a mahram or her husband.

It has been reported in another hadith by Ibn Abbaas r.a that Rasulullaah s.a.w said, “No strange (ghair mahram) male should be in seclusion with a woman, and no woman should travel without a mahram.” A person stood up and said, “O messenger of Allaah s.a.w, my name has already been written for such and such battle, whereas my wife has already left on the journey to hajj.” Nabi s.a.w said, “Go and join your wife on hajj” (Bukhari)

The law of purdah at the time of unforeseen circumstances:

At the time of an unforeseen circumstance such as a fire, earthquake, flood, drowning or a woman is required to assist at the time of war, the laws of purdah, seeking permission to enter a home, seeking permission from the husband, will all fall away within necessity.

Purdah of the voice:

Just as it is necessary for a woman to conceal her body from ghair mahram men, it is also essential that her voice does not reach ghair mahram men. Nevertheless, at the time of need she may speak to a ghair mahram from behind a veil. **She may also talk over the telephone to a ghair mahram within necessity.** The etiquette though, is that she should shun the natural softness of tone, and adopt a firm tone so as not to give the opportunity to a ghair mahram man to take any pleasure from the natural softness in the voice. One can gage the level of precaution taken by shariah from this. Allaahu Akbar!

These days, even those homes where some heed is taken as far as purdah is concerned, no heed is taken as far as purdah of the voice is concerned. In fact many times women speak to ghair mahram men without any necessity. The manner in which they speak to ghair mahram men is the same as that when speaking to a mahram of theirs. The casual manner in which one speaks to his mother, daughter, wife, sister etc. and joke with them, with which there is no problem at all, this very same casual manner is adopted when speaking to ghair mahram women.

Similarly ghair mahram adopt this same manner when speaking to ghair mahram men. Laughing, joking and teasing one another. This has become common practice in society these days. **Remember well! Just as there is purdah for the physical body, there is purdah of the voice.** Just as it is incumbent upon a woman to avoid coming in the presence of a ghair mahram man, it is incumbent upon her to ensure that she speaks in such a manner that her voice does not reach a ghair mahram man. Yes, where there is a need to speak to a ghair mahram, she will speak within necessity. Ghair mahram men should also be weary as to not give an attentive ear to the voice of a ghair mahram woman.

For a male to listen the voice of a ghair mahram woman or a woman to listen to the voice of a ghair mahram man with the intention of soothing the inner soul is absolutely impermissible. Hajj is a commandment which is necessary to carry out. While performing hajj, we are instructed to **call out the talbiya** (the saying of labbayk Allaahuma labbayk.) Whilst the men are told to call it out in a loud voice, **the women are ordered to call it out in a low voice.**

We have noticed at many gatherings for women, loud speakers are put into place by means of which the talk or naat of a woman can be heard a distance away; this is in no way permissible. It is required that gatherings held for women should be indoors, and, if due to a large number of women gathering, there is a need for a loud speaker, then too the voice should not carry out of that area.

Fashion burqa (headgear):

Nowadays designer burqas have become common. It is not permissible to wear any of the following types of burqa; one that clings to the body thereby revealing the shape and contours of the body; one that is so fine that the hair or other limbs can be seen; to wear a veil with a broad gap revealing the cheeks; such a thin veil which enhances the beauty of the face and cheeks and becomes a means of attraction instead of distraction; a burqa with flowers (sewn) on it; a burqa which is of a bright color or one that has been beautified by embroidery; on any such burqa that will draw the attention of those with dirty hearts. In all these instances the burqa instead of being a veil becomes a means of drawing more attention and causing the one who didn't see, to now look. My Allaah protect us.

Of what type should the burqa and cloth/cloak be:

The precise description and color of the type of burqa and cloth/cloak that should be used is not found in shariah. Nevertheless, there are certain conditions laid down. Any burqa or cloth/cloak having the conditions mentioned bellow will be classified as permitted.

1. It conceals the entire body.
2. The burqa or cloak should itself be of a simple material. Not beautified, nor of an attractive color. It should not be beautified with any type of embroidery etc.
3. It should be thick enough to conceal the limbs of the body.
4. It should be loose fitting so as not to expose the figure and shape of the body.
5. One eyes space or two eyes space whenever needed to see the road etc. can be left open. All effort should be made not to expose any other part of the face

other than the eyes. If netting can be put over the eyes to conceal them, this is excellent. It is also necessary to cover the normal clothing worn.

6. The hands (only from the fingers up to the wrists) and the feet only can be exposed. Though, covering these with gloves and socks would be better.

The harms of present day clothing:

These days such clothing which reveal the body beneath the clothing have become the norm. Many men and women are seen wearing such clothing through which the thighs can be seen. To wear or to clothe someone in such clothing is equal. Salah in such clothing is incorrect. **For the salah of a woman to be valid her entire body other than the face, hands and feet has to be covered.** In reality, many women's salah is invalid due to them wearing such fine two pieced headgear that the hair can be seen through it. The salah of some women is invalid because of the exposing their arms. Sometimes, although it is covered, the same two pieced cloth is used which is very thin. Some women don saris or such blouses which reach only the navel exposing half the stomach. Salah in such clothing is not valid.

It is narrated in a narration of Abu-Dawud that a woman should not wear such a fine two pieced head gear through which the hair and body can be seen.

It is necessary for women to wear full length sleeves. It is a sin for women to wear short sleeved tops or dresses. Women are also prohibited from wearing such fine clothing through which the body can be seen. Such women will on the Day of Judgment be raised naked.

We should understand this well, and not look at the trends of the world, but look at deen. What could happen by bearing the slight heat of this world and hearing a few words from the modern women? At least one will receive the bounties of paradise, where we will enjoy whatever we desire.

Emphasis regarding observance of purdah from male in-laws:

Hadhrat Uqbah bin Aamir r.a narrates that Rasulullaah s.a.w said, **"Do not come (in the presence) of ghair mahram women."** Someone asked, "What is the ruling as regards the male in-laws?" Rasulullaah s.a.w said, **"The male in-laws are death."** (Bukhari and Muslim)

The point most worthy of attention in this hadith is that Nabi s.a.w has compared the male in-laws to death. The meaning of this is that a woman should observe strict purdah from her husband's brothers, the husband of her husband's sister and all male in-laws. It is necessary for a woman to observe purdah from all ghair mahram men, but as far as the male in-laws are concerned, a woman should avoid coming in their presence just as she would avoid death. The reason for this is that a woman considers these to be family men and therefore invites them and with out any formalities allows them into (the house). A lot of mix up takes place like this. The conversations sometimes become intimate and jovial. The husband thinks that these are just family men, why should he reprimand them? When finally the man's heart is inclined to his sister in-law, the husband is left ashamed. When there is an attraction between the two and regular visits take place, and they look at one another in the absence of the

husband, even those things end up happening which ought not to happen. Even a neighbor is not able to seduce a woman as easily as what a bother in-law or any male in-law relative is able to. Keeping these possibilities in mind Nabi s.a.w has sternly advised a woman to avoid her male in-laws by comparing them to death, as one by nature avoids death. Similarly men are advised not to intermingle or look at their female in-law relatives.

Warning:

The observance of purdah is a shar'i right and not the husband's right. Many people are under the notion that a woman has to observe purdah from those, whom her husband tells her to, and those whom he says she may come into their presence without purdah; she doesn't need to observe purdah from such men. This is absolutely incorrect. A woman cannot come into the presence of any ghair mahram without purdah. **No consideration will be given to the instructions of the husband which are contrary to the commands of shariah.**

It has been mentioned in a recorded lecture by Moulana Rashid Ahmed sahib, that some people say, "There is no harm if we do not observe purdah. Maashaa Allaah, our wives, daughters, daughters in law, sisters etc. are very pious. They are so noble that evil doesn't even come in their eyes. How would (evil) then come into their hearts? This is very far fetched. Our brothers and other close relatives, paternal cousins, maternal cousins, are all very noble, such evil cannot even be perceived by us." We find that as important as this command (purdah) is, that is how much negligence is found as regards it. Leave alone the general public, much negligence is found amongst the Ulama as regards this matter also. A violation of the command found in the Quraan is taking place, as though this command was never revealed in the Quraan.

Their actions and conditions appear as though there is no command of purdah in the Quraan.

I will narrate a few incidents of families who were chaster than you. They were very proud of their chastity like you. When they turned a blind eye to the command of Allaah as regards purdah, what was the end result? These are not incidents of the past, these are contemporary incidents. These are incidents which occurred in Karachi. Were it not for fear that these families would be disgraced, I would have told you their names and location so that you can go to them and ask them what had happened to them. The reality of the matter is that they violated the law of Allaah, and thereby themselves brought disgrace to their families. Now listen to their incidents. May Allaah allow these words to reach our hearts.

The first incident:

There used to be a hajji sahib who was very pious and chaste. People had so much confidence and trust in him, that they would leave hundreds of thousands in his safe keeping. A few friends of his once came to me and narrated the following incident. They told me that he had gotten involved in an illicit relationship with his wife's sister in spite of his wife being present. In the very house where his wife and in-laws were present, he had gotten involved with his sister-in-law. Furthermore, he secretly arranged a passport, applied for visas to a certain country, shaved off his beard, wore

a coat and pants, and thereafter ran off with the belongings of those who had left (valuables) in his trust. Though, looking at his appearance, no person from even a distance would think him capable of doing evil, but (look at) what had happened. Now you can well imagine, people think that it is impossible for such evil to take place in their families. The environment in my home is very pure. Now how can this wishful thinking and illusion be cured?

The second incidents:

This is also an incident of Karachi. There was a man who, Maashaa-Allaah was very pious. He was also very actively involved in deeni efforts. He was also honored to have visited the house of Allaah on hajj. In spite of all this, due to being lax in as far as purdah from his sister in-law was concerned, he was secretly involved with her. There relationship lasted many years. She used to take contraceptive pills to avoid pregnancy. This relationship continued until she was married and went off to live with her husband.

The third incident:

There was this man who was punctual with his salah and fasting. His wife was the lantern of a noble family. They were lax with the observance of purdah. He would visit his friends, and friends would freely visit them. In the interim his wife's eyes fell on one of his friends. Slowly a relationship developed. While the husband was at work during the day, and the children were at school, the wife enjoyed herself in seclusion with the friend. After some time, the husband found out. He tried to rectify the situation, but after failing, he finally resorted to divorcing her.

These three incidents maybe noted as examples, otherwise, there are countless examples the like of these. It is apparent that it starts of with laxity in purdah. Non observance of purdah is the stepping stone. The brakes are put on the first step through observance of purdah.

The method of observing purdah in a joint family situation:

Women living in a joint family structure, where ghair mahram men reside in the same home (e.g. the husband's brothers), should always be cautious as these men constantly come in and out of the house. She should avoid a situation of being unveiled. She should take precaution in the manner of her dressing. Her head should especially be always covered. Men living in such a structure should alert the women of their arrival by making a sound of clearing their throat etc. Many women complain that ghair mahram men living in the same home as them do not alert them of their arrival in spite of knowing that they should do so. A woman should exercise extra care in such situations. She should know that this is a jihad for her. A woman will earn more rewards for the difficulty she undergoes. She should turn her away from a ghair mahram when he appears before her. If she is unable to turn away, then she should use her headgear to cover her face. She should not speak to the ghair mahram without necessity, and when she has to speak to him, she should limit the conversation within necessity. It is not permissible to ask him regarding his well being nor to serve food to him or ask him to for household necessities.

A woman should avoid talking to her mahram relatives in a casual and jovial manner in the presence of mahram men.

After taking all such precautions, if a ghair mahram's gaze falls upon a woman, or her gaze falls on a ghair mahram, this is overlooked (by shariah). Even if this occurs many tames or thousands of times accidentally. There is no sin upon a person for this and one should not be worried by it. There should be no negligence in as far as that which is within the means, and there is no need to worry about that which is beyond ones means as there's no punishment or retribution for this. That which occurs thousands of times unintentionally is repeatedly pardoned. Look at the benevolence of the most benevolent. Though, we should never look at his kindness and mercy and thereby become bold and fearless. All out effort should be made and no negligence should be entertained. Remember well, just as our Rabb is kind and grateful to those servants who are obedient to Him, His punishment is severe on those who are ungrateful and disobedient to Him.

That woman, who finds it difficult to cover her face, has been given permission by the Ulama to expose her face and hands from the wrists, though she will have to cover her forearms. It would be best if she covers her face as this is the center of all attraction and beauty in a woman and there is fear of evil and men falling into sin by it being left exposed. Therefore, a home in which there is fear that the ghair mahram men may fall into evil, a woman should ensure that she veils her face. Where there is no such fear, it would be okay for a woman to remain unveiled. Nevertheless, this law is only applicable for those ghair mahram men who live in the same home, as it is difficult for a woman to remain in the confines of one room and it is also difficult for her to fulfill the household chores with a veil. Shariah has therefore given women this leeway so as to make it easy for her to fulfill her household chores.

The manner of purdah from those relatives who frequently visit:

There are some such relatives who do not reside in the same home, though they frequently visit. Amongst them are the husband's cousins, both maternal and paternal. These are regarded as brothers due to which due importance to purdah is not given, whereas observance of purdah is essential. The manner in which this matter may be resolved is as follows. The most senior of the household should inform the rest of the family that, Insha-Allaah as of today purdah will be observed. All those cousins or ghair mahram relatives, who frequently visit, should in the future sit in the lounge when visiting. Those relatives, who previously entered directly into the bedrooms and casually sat with the womenfolk and spoke to them in a free manner, should in future refrain from such behavior and avoid such occasions.

Men should be seated in the room used by men:

Whenever any male ghair mahram visits, even if he is a relative, he should only meet with the men folk. He will not meet the women of the house, yes; if he is a mahram he may meet the women also, as there is no observance of purdah from them. Here too the matter should be resolved by sitting everyone once off. When it will be resolved once off, it would also make it easier for the women to observe purdah. After having resolved the matter, all ghair mahram male relatives of the husband and of the wife

will only meet and sit with the men folk. If the women need to speak to them, they may do so from behind a curtain or over the intercom or telephone.

This will seem strange for a few days, but soon after there will be a great feeling of prosperity and the women will be at ease, and above all the shar'i purdah will be maintained and both men and women will be saved from the sin of non observance of purdah. To attain this, the women would first have to mentally prepare themselves and the men will have to assist them. When everyone will make this resolution together, the matter will soon be resolved. Conversely when the men and women will not be ready for this, they will spend their entire lives in sin.

If you do not wish it (for) yourself, then you will make thousands of excuses!

Since we do not perceive this to be a sin and we show no importance to save ourselves from the sin nor do we have any concern to do so, we find it difficult. In reality there are easy ways to save ourselves. (Extracted from, Purdah for women, by Mufti Abdur-Rauf Sakharwi)

Purdah is compulsory on women, not men:

Some people say that when visiting family, some ghair mahram women do not observe purdah from them even after being told to do so.

These people should firstly know well that purdah is compulsory on women, not men. Therefore, if women appear before men without purdah, the sin would be on them and not the men. Men should in these situations observe the following guidelines;

1. Keep their gazes low.
2. Do not speak to ghair mahram women without necessity.
3. You should use these occasions to advice them with regards to purdah. One of the benefits of this is that you would have fulfilled your obligation of conveying, and the second benefit is that perhaps the women would take heed; as a result it will make it easy for you to visit these homes in the future. Ghair mahram women will not appear before you. Allaah forbid, if a woman is not guided to observe purdah, the least benefit (your advice will have is that) she will be ashamed to come in your presence. **It is the nature of humans that they feel ashamed to appear before a person in a manner disliked by that person.** Many women do not observe purdah from general public or even sinful people, but they observe purdah from Ulama and pious personalities. The reason for this is that these people dislike non observance of purdah; therefore women are ashamed to appear before them without purdah. A person should prove through his speech and action that he dislikes non observance of purdah. The effect of this would be that ghair mahram women will refrain from coming in front of such a person. This has been a tried and tested formula. I have given many people this advice and they were saved from ghair mahram women by practicing on it. (Shar'i purdah, by Mufti Rashid Ahmed)

The method of adopting purdah in the home:

Many people complain that they desire the observance of purdah in the home. They make an effort towards this and preach with regards to it, yet their wife does not take heed. They say that they are now sinning, therefore what should they do? An Aalim wrote that he is an Imam in a certain Masjid. His wife does not observe purdah from close relatives in spite of him explaining to her. (He feels) that due to her non observance of purdah this makes him a faasiq, and the Imamat of a faasiq is makrooh-e-tahrimi, what should he do? Should he give up the Imamat? The laws of shariah in this regard are as follows;

1. A person should be concerned about the rectification of his personal actions. One should make an effort to bring his internal and external life according to shariah. When a person himself is righteous, his words have an effect on others. In fact, people are guided merely by his actions.
2. He should not express anger or be hard on his wife over personal or worldly matters. This will give her the impression that your anger over deeni matters is normal behavior, and you are using deen as an excuse to get angry.
3. One should make dua for the guidance of the wife.
4. One should fulfill the duty of conveying with love and kindness.
5. Daily without fail one should read some form of literature for a short while which will create the love of Allaah and concern for the hereafter, like Fazaail-e-Amaal etc. Instead of speaking, read a book to her as this has a greater effect. The reasons for this are many:

a) It is the nature of human beings not to take much effect from their companions, more especially in a husband wife relationship. These relationships are such that one gives little attention to the advice of the other. An outsider’s advice and more especially the advices of the pious predecessors have greater effect.
b) The sincerity of the writer has its own effect which is transferred to the reader.
c) By reading a book nothing read is attributed to the reader, rather everything is attributed to the writer. In this way one is protected from conflict of personal interests.
d) Less time is spent in reading as compared to advising, in which much time can be used, and the listener can get tired.
e) Where one is able to tolerate the consequences of harshness, one may adopt harshness according to the need, but only after giving it much thought. One should think well, if by showing harshness should the wife leave and go to the in laws or become a living misery; will he be able to tolerate this? If, Allaah forbid, one becomes perturbed and thereby entertains the wife; what respect will he have? Besides losing respect, in future the wife will dance on the head for every little thing! Therefore, no step should be taken towards harshness without thinking carefully.
f) The husband will not be sinful if the wife does not take heed after adopting kind and harsh methods. This is on condition that all the above guidance was followed. One should use all his resources. After making all out effort, if the wife does not adopt purdah the husband will not be sinning.

There is no need to divorce a woman who does not observe purdah. When one has permission to marry a Christian or a Jew, then he has permission of a higher degree to marry a Muslim woman who does not observe purdah. Although it should be remembered, marriage to a Christian or Jew though valid, in this day and

age will not be permissible. Such a woman will (in these days) be a cause for the man to leave Islaam. If, the husband is saved, the children will surely follow in her footsteps. Similarly, it should be borne in mind that permission to keep a woman who does not observe purdah is granted to that man who learnt of the irreligiousness of the wife after marriage, or he had knowledge of this before marriage, but he himself at that time had no concern for the hereafter, only after marriage Allaah guided him and now he became concerned as regards to purdah. **The bottom line is that it not permissible in the first place to marry a woman who does not observe purdah, and if this happens after marriage, it will be permissible to patiently persevere.**

Observance of purdah when undergoing (medical) treatment:

It is not necessary that a woman observes purdah under normal conditions only, but she has to compulsorily observe purdah according to her capability when undergoing medical treatment also. The people of this age are amazing. **Those families who are conscious of observing purdah under normal circumstances are found to be negligent as regards purdah at the time of treatment. Whereas, the principle to follow here is, a woman should first look for a mahram doctor, failing which she should look for a Muslim female doctor, failing which she should look for a non Muslim female doctor, failing which she may go to a ghair mahram doctor.**

An important principle of shariah worthy of note is that, necessity will be fulfilled within the limits of necessity. This means that only that amount of the body could be exposed which is sufficient for the doctor to do his diagnosis. For example if it is sufficient for him to give a diagnosis by checking the pulse only, he cannot look at or touch any other part of the body. Similarly if a woman has an injury to her arm or calf, then only that amount of the body maybe seen by the doctor which is necessary. If the eye or teeth require necessary treatment, it will not be permissible to expose the entire face, but only that amount will be exposed which is necessary. The same applies in the case of an injury to the back or stomach. **The doctor can only see the affected area. To expose more than required is a sin.** The method of doing this is as follows. A woman should wear some old clothes and cut that part of the cloth which covers the area requiring treatment so that the doctor does not see the rest of the stomach or back. **Since it is not permissible for a woman to expose those parts of her body from the navel to the knee to another woman,** should a woman require treatment to a sore or injury on the buttocks or thigh, and the female doctor needs to see the same, here to the clothes will be cut and only that part which is necessary to expose will be exposed. Another point to remember is, **when exposing that part requiring treatment to the doctor, those close male relatives who are present cannot look at the exposed part.** Yes, if the person present is such that according to shariah it is permissible for him to see that part, then he can see. E.g. the father or blood brother is present and an injury to the calf has to be shown to the doctor, then in this instance the father or brother can also look at the injured area. They will not be sinning as the calf can be exposed in the presence of a mahram.

It should also be understood here, that the details given for a woman when undergoing treatment are also applicable to men, as purdah from the navel to the knee of one man from another is compulsory. Therefore, should a man require treatment to an injury on the buttock or thigh, or the doctor needs to administer an

injection to the buttock, the doctor can only see that amount of the body which is necessary. It is impermissible for others to see these parts of the body.

Negligence at the time of childbirth:

At the time of childbirth the mid-wife or nurse may only see that amount of the vagina which is necessary. It is prohibited for them to see more. Even if those present are the mother or sisters (of the woman giving birth), they are prohibited from looking at these parts of the body as there is no need for them to do so. Therefore they have no permission whatsoever to look. This custom which has become common, that a woman is thrown naked (at the time of childbirth) and a whole host of women stand by watching, is absolutely haraam. **A Muslim woman may only expose her hands up to the wrists and her feet up to the ankle to a non Muslim woman.** (In other words there is nothing wrong if these become exposed.) Besides these parts of the body, it is impermissible to expose even a single strand of hair to a non Muslim woman. This rule is applicable to all non Muslim women, be it a mid-wife, nurse, female doctor, domestic worker, laundry woman or any other non Muslim woman. Therefore, at the time of childbirth a non Muslim mid-wife or nurse etc. should not be called as it haraam to expose the private parts to them. However, where a Muslim mid-wife is not available, a non Muslim mid-wife etc. maybe called.

Observance of purdah on the journey to hajj:

So much emphasis is laid on observance of purdah in shariah, that even in the state of Ihraam it has been taken into consideration.

Hadhrat Aeysha r.a reports that, "(On the journey to hajj) when men would pass by us and we were with Nabi s.a.w in the state of ihraam. (Since it is not permissible to cover the face in the state of ihraam, therefore our faces were exposed, and at the same time observance of purdah at the time of hajj is necessary), therefore when these **men would come alongside us, we would take a big sheet and hang it over our face, once they had gone ahead, we would then remove it." (Abu-Dawud)**

Many people think it is unnecessary to observe purdah in the state of Ihraam as it is non-permissible to put any cloth on the face (directly). This is only due to their lack of knowledge and sheer ignorance. At such a time, the Ulama say that no cloth should touch the face and purdah should still be observed. A woman should place a hand fan or sun cup on her head over which she should put her purdah, like many women do. **It is reported in another narration from Hadhrat Aeysha r.a that a woman should use a sheet to cover her face when in the state of Ihraam. (Fathul Baari Kitaabul-Hajj)**

Observing purdah from a eunuch (one who has both sexual organs):

We have been commanded in the hadith to observe purdah from eunuchs. To look at, touch, or listen to (the voice) with lustful desire are all acts of adultery of the respective limbs. These qualities are found in eunuchs, and as such some of them have sexual manhood abilities. (Ahsanul-fataawa)

To look at a ghair mahram corpse of a woman or vice versa:

It is not permissible to show the face of a dead woman to her ghair mahram. The sin of this will be on those who show the face. The deceased will also be sinning if she was happy with this in her lifetime. Therefore, women should make a bequest that ghair mahram men are not allowed to see their face after their demise. (Aap ka masaail aur un ka hal *vol.3 pg.109*)

It is permissible for a man to see the face of his wife after her demise, but it would not be permissible for him to touch her or perform her ghusl as his marriage to her has terminated upon her demise. However a woman may touch her husband or perform his ghusl after his demise as the effects of the marriage last till the end of the waiting period. (Aap ka masaail aur un ka hal *vol.3 pg.102*)

Similarly it is not permissible for a woman to look at the face of a deceased ghair mahram.

Ladies going on vacation:

Women are permitted to go on holidays with their mahram relatives at the time of need observing full purdah. It should also be kept in mind that whilst on holiday (there is no permission) to indulge in acts contrary to shariah. (Extracted from; women's clothing and the shar'i ruling regarding purdah. Written by Mufti Muhammed Kamaalud-deen.)

Permission to see a woman before proposing for marriage:

A person intending to get married has been given permission by shariah to see a woman once, so as to make it easy to make a decision. After the proposal they both remain strangers to one another and strict purdah has to be maintained until the nikah. (Aap ka masaail aur un ka hull *vol.8 pg.63*)

The poisonous effect of co-education:

These days' girls are sent to study at schools and colleges. Much effort is being made for them to acquire degrees. The first law to be violated here is that a woman should remain in the seclusion of the home, and should she need to leave the home, she should do so within certain restrictions. Nevertheless, (nowadays) they leave the house without observing purdah, and all dolled up reeking of perfume. The remaining damage is done by co-education. Girls, boys, adult males and females all sit in one class. **The amazing thing is that they are sitting to acquire a degree in Islaamiat, and at this precise moment they violate the laws of Islaam!** Those who take objection to this (form of education) and advice them that it is contrary to Shariah, are very articulately presented with Ahaadith and Quranic verses, and the matter is avoided. Educating women in colleges, schools and universities in these days, even if separate from males, have much harm;

1. She leaves the home without shar'i justification and becomes the means of inclining men towards her.
2. She exposes herself to an evil environment.

3. By intermingling with women of different mindsets, she develops within her many evils.
4. She participates in lectures which are contrary to Shariah.
5. She engages in the sin of learning from men without the observance of purdah.
6. By acquiring education from irreligious women, her Imaan, good deeds and character is destroyed.
7. She comes into the presence of sinful women, whereas she ought to observe purdah from such women. **Ibn Aabideen r.a says, "It is inappropriate that a sinful woman looks at a pious woman, as she (the sinful woman) has the qualities of men. Therefore, she (the pious woman) should not remove her cloak or veil in her (the sinful woman's) presence. (Raddul Mukhtar *Vol.5 pg.238*)**
8. She will develop the desire to imitate non believers and irreligious people.
9. Her love for the material things of this world and the love for position will increase, which in turn will destroy her worldly life and her life of the hereafter.
10. She will become negligent of her natural duties of serving her husband, nurturing the children and seeing to the chores and cleanliness of the house.
11. She will work in an office environment which will destroy her deen and dunya.
12. She will constrain the avenues of earning for men.
13. She will begin to rule over her husband.

Besides the above mentioned harms of co-education, intermingling of males and females breads illicit relationships, courtship relations, other evils and also leads to acts such as abduction. Therefore, educating females in present day institutes is forbidden.

It is prohibited for men to imitate women and women to imitate men, and a means of being accursed:

Hadhrat Aeysha r.a says that a woman extended her hand beyond the curtain intending to give Nabi s.a.w a piece of paper. Nabi s.a.w held back his hand saying that he not sure if this was the hand of a man or woman. The woman said that it was a woman's hand. Nabi s.a.w then said that had it been a woman's hand she would have changed the color of her nails with henna. (Mishkat *pg.383*)

Commentary:

We learn from this hadith that the women amongst the Sahaba observed purdah from Nabi s.a.w. It was due to this that the woman gave the paper from behind a curtain. Had she not observed purdah from Nabi s.a.w, why was there any need for a curtain?

The deviation of ignorant saints:

We also learn about the deviation of those ignorant saints who allow their female disciples to enter their homes unveiled and not observing any purdah whatsoever. Ignorant women ask, "What purdah do we need to make from them? They are saintly and pious." In that case, can there ever be any personality more pious than Nabi

s.a.w? Who are they to turn a blind eye on purdah, when the Sahabiat (female Sahabi) observed purdah from Nabi s.a.w? These people make false claims of piety and enter upon females. Such people can never be spiritual guides; rather they lead one to the pathway of shaytan. It is not permissible for any woman or man to take such a person as their spiritual guide.

Another lesson learnt from the above hadith is that a woman should behave like a woman, and her applying henna on her hands is a sign of her being feminine. Therefore a woman should even apply henna on her palms. The least she should do is always apply henna on her nails. **Men should behave as men, and women as women.**

Hadhrat Ibn Mulaikah r.a, (a Taab'i), says that someone informed Aeysha r.a of a woman who wore shoes of men. Aeysha r.a said that Nabi s.a.w had cursed those women who imitate men. (Mishkat *pg.383* taken from Abu-Dawud)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah r.a has narrated that Nabi s.a.w cursed that man who wears the clothing of women, and he also cursed that woman who wears the clothing of men.

Women going to Aamils (one who treats people affected by sorcery etc.):

It has become very common these days that women rush to Aamils for amulets and holy water etc. In most cases these women are unveiled. At such times of need a mahram male should be sent to these Aamils to collect these amulets etc. **In a dire state of necessity a woman may accompany her mahram.** If, for some reason a mahram is unavailable, and the difficulty is unbearable, then a female should be taken along and all laws of purdah should be strictly adhered to and at no point should she be alone in seclusion with a ghair mahram Aamil.

The prohibition of women visiting the cemetery and (the prohibition) of lighting lamps or prostrating before graves:

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbaas r.a reports that Nabi s.a.w had cursed those women who visit the graveyard and those who prostrate before graves and those who light lanterns on graves. (Mishkat *pg.71* taken from Abu-Dawud and Thirmizi)

In the early days of Islaam Nabi s.a.w had prohibited one and all from visiting the graveyards; thereafter he had granted general permission to visit the graveyard. Hence, some Ulama are of the opinion that both men and women have been granted permission; therefore initially women did not have permission, but because of the general permission granted in this Hadith, they are also permitted to visit the graveyard.

Other Ulama say that permission is granted only the favor of men. They argue that women are weak hearted and impatient, similarly they are naturally frightened, therefore it is inappropriate for them to go to the graveyard. The above Hadith is apparently in support of this verdict. **It is unanimously agreed upon that the grave of Rasulullaah s.a.w is exclusion to this rule.** It is permissible for both men and women to visit his grave. It is not permissible to light lanterns on graves for the simple reason that it is a waste of money. Nevertheless, the Ulama say that if there is

a pathway near a grave and lighting is put in place for the purpose of those who may pass by at night, so as to make it easy for them to see, there is no prohibition. Reason being, that in this case, the light is not meant for the grave but for a different purpose altogether.

The reliable and authentic research of Moulana Shah Muhammed Ishaaq Muhaddith Dehlawi is that it is (makrooh-e-tahrimi) close to haraam for women to visit the graveyard. It has been recorded that it is therefore desirable for men to visit the graveyard and makrooh for women to do so.

It has been recorded in Nisaabul Ihtisaab that when Qadhi r.a was asked as regards to the permission granted to women to visit the graveyard and the associated evils, he said, **"Do not question as regards its permissibility and the associated evil, rather ask of the extent of the curses that rains upon a woman! Listen well, when a woman intends visiting the graveyard, she is invoked by the curse of Allaah and his angels, thereafter when she advances to the graveyard, shaytan envelopes her, upon reaching the cemetery, the souls of the dead curse her, and on her return she is again invoked with curses by Allaah and his angels."**

It reported in the ahaadith that a woman who visits the graveyard is cursed by all the angels in the heavens and the earth. **(On the contrary) that woman, who supplicates on behalf of the deceased in the confines of her home, attains the reward of Umrah and Hajj.**

It has been reported by Hadhrat Salmaan r.a and Hadhrat Abu Hurairah r.a that Nabi s.a.w once left the Masjid and stood at the doorway to his house. By and by Hadhrat Fatima r.a passed. Nabi s.a.w questioned her as regards to where she had been, to which she replied that she had been returning from visiting the home of a woman who had passed on. Nabi s.a.w then asked her if she had visited her grave. Fatima r.a exclaimed, "I seek refuge in Allaah! How can I possibly do something, the prohibition of which I have heard from you?" Nabi s.a.w then said that had she gone to the graveyard, she would have not received even the fragrance of paradise!

Qadhi Thanaaullaah Paani Patti has written in his book, Maa-laa-budda-minhoo, that visiting the graveyard is permissible for men and not women. (With reference from Mazaahir-e-haq *pg.513*)

The **verdict** with regards to this matter though, is that young women are not permitted to go to graveyards, **whilst old women are permitted to go with complete adherence to the laws of purdah and without beautifying themselves or applying any perfume.** They should also know well that they cannot wail, or hit themselves at the gravesides (in mourning). It is also strictly forbidden for them to ask for their needs to be fulfilled by the inhabitants of the grave, nor is it permissible for them to take omens in the name of the deceased, discard Allaah and ask for children from them or carry out any other innovative act. (Shaami *pg.843 vol.1* Imdaadul-Fataawa *pg.530 vol.1* Imdaadul-Ahkaam *pg.720 vol.1*)

We learn from the ahaadith that making the grave an idol (something to worship) or to gather at a grave for any form of celebration in the manner in which we gather for eid, are all acts which are regarded as serious sins by Allaah and Rasulullaah s.a.w. The

celebrations held in the name of *urs* at the graves of (pious people) actually entail many types of sin. To circumambulate the grave (whereas this is the specialty of the Ka'ba) is not permissible. The lighting of lanterns on the graves, people dancing at the graveside, placing of flowers and sheets on these graves, burning incense sticks, washing the graves and many other similar sins take place on such occasions. Many acts of shirk and innovation take place also. May Allaah grant us correct understanding. (aameen)

The age at which purdah becomes compulsory:

The question which remains is, at what age does a girl have to begin observing purdah? Similarly, what should the boy's age be when purdah has to be observed from him? We will now look into the details of these rulings.

The age at which purdah becomes compulsory on a girl:

As far as the age at which purdah becomes compulsory on a girl is concerned, the jurists are unanimous, in the light of proofs and **experience that a girl reaches the age of (sexual) desire by the age of nine. Therefore, purdah on a girl will be compulsory at this age.** When a girl has the potential to be biologically mature at the age of nine, she is close to biological maturity to a higher degree at this age, and the laws of purdah for a girl closing onto maturity is the same as one who is mature.

So, at what age should a girl begin to observe purdah? Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi r.a says, "In this age a girl should begin observing purdah from her ghair mahram relatives at the age of seven and from general ghair mahram males before the age of seven!"

This was said approximately 60/70 years ago. In these days of evil even more importance should be given to this. It would therefore be better to develop the habit of observing purdah from the age of seven.

We learn from the above explanations that a girl 9 yrs of age and a boy 10 yrs of age are bound by the laws of purdah. It will be incumbent upon their guardians to ensure that they observe these laws should (the children) be negligent in this regard. No leniency should be tolerated.

The age at which it becomes compulsory for a boy to observe the laws of purdah:

The objective of the laws of purdah on men and women is to save them from evil glances and the sin of evil thoughts. Therefore, the laws of purdah will become binding at that age when there is a possibility of them falling into sin. The laws of purdah for a young boy will be the same as that for an adult man. Allaah says, "And that child who is unaware of the details of the private parts of a woman…" (Surah Noor) Under the commentary of this verse, **Imam Khaazin r.a says, "One who has not reached the age of (sexual) desire." (Tafsirul-Khaazin *pg.349 vol.3*) This would therefore imply that purdah is compulsory on a youngster who has reached the age of desire.**

Nabi s.a.w has stipulated 10 yrs as the age of puberty. Nabi s.a.w has said, **"Command your children (to perform) salah at the age of 7 and admonish them for neglect of the same at the age of 10, and separate their sleeping (place at the same age)." (Abu-Dawud)**

In the light of this hadith we learn that the reason for separation in sleeping places is due to the possibility of having developed sexual desires (by this age). Similarly the reason for admonishing them on the neglect of salah at this age is due to the laws of an adult becoming applicable to them. **Mullah Ali Qari r.a explaining this says, "It is due to them becoming (physically) mature or close to being mature. (Mirqaat *pg.115 vol.2*) This means that a person may already be mature at this age or at the least, one is close to puberty. Commentating on this hadith Allama Teebi says, "There is a possibility of having sexual desires at this age." (Mirqaat *pg.116 vol.2*)**

The jurists have also in the light of this hadith mentioned that a boy is close to puberty and has sexual desires.

From the above quotations we learn that the laws of purdah become binding on a boy of 10 yrs and a girl of 9 yrs as both have reached an age of sexual desire.

NB: Depending on the upbringing and environment the age of purdah could be less or more. Therefore, it is not permissible for a 9 yr old girl to be thought at a school by a ghair mahram male nor is it permissible to study under a ghair mahram ustaad at a madrasah. It is also not permissible for ghair mahram teachers to teach girls 9 yrs and older. Nevertheless, there is permission for a ghair mahram to teach such a girl observing purdah and without being in seclusion with her. In a similar manner, it is not permissible for a boy of 10 yrs or older to school, study or be tutored by a female ghair mahram. The same applies as far as deeni education is concerned. A ghair mahram female teacher may also not teach boys of 10 yrs and older. Similarly it is not permissible to teach girls 9 yrs and older together with boys 10 yrs and older in one and the same class.

It is commonly noticed that boys 10 yrs and older bring goods to the house of the ustaad or offer other services (at his home) whilst his wife (who is ghair mahram to these boys) is present. Taking them to be young boys who are as good as her own children, she does not observe purdah from these youngsters. This is not permissible, neigh, it is haraam.

It is also commonly noticed in madrasah's meant for girls, girls who are 9 yrs and older attending these madrasah's, do not observe purdah on their way to and from madrasah. As a result their faces, clothing etc. are exposed. In turn, those men habitual of sinning or casting evil glances, take full advantage of looking at them on their way to and from madrasah. The very purpose of these madrasah's is that they fulfill the obligation of spreading and preserving deen and stopping evil so that goodness spreads, but it is sad to say that these girls are practically inviting people to the sin (of casting evil glances). Instead of spreading goodness, they end up spreading evil. It is extremely heartbreaking to note that those responsible at such institutes show such apathy towards an important matter such as this. Remember, if these girls are not stopped and ordered to observe purdah, the responsible people at these

institutes will also be sinning. It is also the duty of the girl herself to ensure that she goes to and comes from Madrasah observing the requisites of purdah.

It is the responsibility of the guardians of a girl to ensure that she observes purdah if they find her negligent in this regard. They should not be lax in this matter.

One other ruling worthy of note is that an elderly man (even if he is 70 yrs or more) cannot sit in seclusion with a ghair mahram female. Irrespective of the fact that this seclusion maybe for the dissemination of deen. It is compulsory to observe purdah from elderly ustaad's also**. Allama Ibn Hajar Makki r.a states, "It is compulsory to observe purdah from men of advanced ages also." (Mariful Quraan *pg.405 vol.6*)**

Nevertheless, to seek knowledge from an elderly ustaad observing all the laws of purdah and without any form of seclusion is permissible in itself.

Do not delay in marriage:

I (the author) now feel it necessary to write a few words of encouragement towards marrying as soon as possible. Delaying in marriage is a major factor for the spreading of a host of sins amongst which are, casting evil glances, immodesty, non observance of purdah, adultery, nudity, promiscuity, etc.

Hadhrat Ibn Masood r.a reports that Rasulullaah s.a.w said, "O youth! Those of you who have the ability to marry, should do so as this is a means of (assistance) in lowering the gaze and a protection for the private parts. Those who do not have the ability should fast (so as to curb the sexual desire)." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Almost all the jurists are unanimous that, a person who is prone to fall prey to any haraam act (such as adultery, casting evil glances, etc.) if he does not marry, and such a person does have the ability in as far as the means are concerned, it now becomes compulsory on him to marry. It will be sunnat for any person who has the means but has not reached a state of vulnerability to marry.

It is also almost unanimously agreed upon, that it is haraam or makrooh, for one who is certain that he will involve himself in sin such as not fulfilling the rights of the wife or do injustice to her by marrying, not to marry. There is a difference of opinion as regards the one who has the need to marry, but does not have the necessary means. In the humble opinion of (the author) that the verdict of compulsion will be preferred. In such a case a person should find a job or take a loan to make up the financial means. That individual who has a firm intention to repay a debt and makes an effort to do so, even if he is unable to repay the debt, it is hoped that Allaah will please his creditors as he fell into debt due to performing nikah for the protection of deen. It is not permissible to take a loan for unnecessary expenditure. A loan can be taken for necessary expenses only or wherever the dowry is required immediately.

Nevertheless, the point here is that in an instance where the person has the means and there is a need to marry, it is compulsory for him to marry. (Islaah Inqilaab *vol.2 pg.40*)

Nabi s.a.w once told Ali r.a, “O Ali, do not delay in three things. One, salah when the time has set in, two, burial when the bier is ready, three, marriage of a girl or boy when a match is found.” (Thirmizi)

Hadhrat Abu Zarr r.a reports that a man by the name of Ikaaf bin Bishr Tamimi came to Nabi s.a.w. Nabi s.a.w asked him, “Do you have a wife, O Ikaaf?” He said, “No.” Nabi s.a.w asked, “Don’t you have a slave women?” He said, “No.” Nabi s.a.w asked, “Do you have wealth?” He said, “Yes, I am wealthy.” Nabi s.a.w then said, “You are then from amongst the brothers of shaytan. Had you been a Christian, you would have been from amongst their monks.”

“Verily our practice is to marry. The most mean amongst you are those who do not have wives, and very few of your dead were such who never married. Is it that you people are trapped in the circles of shaytan? The women are the most effective weapon of shaytan in (leading) the pious towards sin. Yes, those who marry (in all likelihood will) remain chaste. (People who marry) will abstain from violation of chastity. O Ikaaf, may you be destroyed, (if you do not marry). Get married, or else you will be from amongst the sinners.” (Narrated by Ahmed in his Musnad. I’laaus Sunan *pg.5 vol.11*)

Nabi s.a.w says something to this effect in one of the Ahaadith, “That person who marries a woman due to her status, Allaah will increase (such a man) in disgrace. That person who marries a woman due to her wealth, Allaah will increase him in poverty. That person who marries a woman due to her family lineage, Allaah will increase him in lowliness. That person who marries a woman, solely so that he can protect his gaze and protect his private parts (from indulging in haraam), Allaah will make this woman a source of blessings for him and make him a source of blessings for her.” (Shaami *vol.2 pg.360*)

Rasulullaah s.a.w has said, “Do not marry a woman due to her beauty; perhaps her beauty leads her to the road of destruction. Do not marry a woman do to her wealth; perhaps her wealth will cause her to become rebellious and extravagant. Marry a woman solely for the deen that she has. (Remember,) a dark and ugly (bad looking) slave girl endowed with good character is far better than a beautiful free woman who has a bad character.” (Ibn Majah)

This ruling is general for a man and woman. A woman and her parents should give preference to a boy with deen in his life. Nabi s.a.w has instructed the families of (marriageable aged) girls thus, “When a proposal is forwarded to you from a boy whose piety and character appeal to you; then get (your daughter) or (that girl who is in your care) married to such a boy, or else great evil will be widespread on earth!”

It is stated in a narration from Abu Haatim Muzani r.a that the Sahaba r.a asked, “Even though there might be something in him? (Implying the lack of wealth or being from a lower lineage.) Nabi s.a.w said, “Marry your girls to those whose deen and character appeals to you, or else great evil will become widespread on the earth!” emphasizing the point Nabi s.a.w repeated himself thrice. (Thirmizi *vol.2 pg.128*)

It has been reported by Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas r.a that Nabi s.a.w said, “Those who have children should give them (their children) good names, a sound Islamic education and

get them married when they reach the age of puberty. Therefore, if after having attained puberty the child is not married off and he/she indulges in sin, the father will receive the sin (to the extent of being a means). The sin of the actual act will be on the child though. (Mishkat)

Hadhrat Umar r.a reports that Nabi s.a.w said, "It has been recorded in the Torah that when a girl reaches the age of 12 and (it is noticeable that she needs to marry from her demeanor) and she is not married, thereafter she gets involved in sin, the sin will also fall on her father." (12 yrs has been mentioned as this is generally the age at which a girl reaches puberty.) (Narrated by Baihaqi in Shu'abul Imaan.)

False customs have made nikah a difficult thing in our country. (The author speaks of his country, Pakistan.) It is a great oppression and an in justice to delay the marriage of a girl and thereby make her wait for a long time, all in the name of her attaining a B.A or M.A degree and thereafter finding someone to match her qualifications or someone of a reputable family, thus imitating the customs of the Hindus. Similarly, asking for jewelry and a huge sum in dowry causes delay in the marriage. The result of all this, is that a girl who, out of modesty, cannot express her desire to marry and the oppression she experiences, slowly but surely becomes spiritually sick or her youthful vigor fades away. It is not permissible to delay marriage of a young girl without a valid reason; merely due to greed for wealth or looking for beauty or so that some custom contrary to Shariah can be fulfilled. **Nevertheless, it is okay to delay the marriage so that a suitable or compatible companion can be found or if the girl needs to learn how to run a home.**

Nabi s.a.w is reported to have said that the most blessed marriage is the one in which the least expenses were incurred. (Mishkat)

Nabi s.a.w is also reported to have said that the most blessed woman is the woman who receives the least amount of dowry. A woman will be blessed to the extent of how minimal her dowry was. (Narrated by Baihaqi in Sunanul-kubra)

It is deduced from a hadith of Rasulullaah s.a.w that the greatest (worldly) wealth is a pious wife. This is for a man, while the greatest (worldly) wealth any woman could possess is a pious husband. Some people delay in marriage due to the fear of not being able to financially support the wife and children after marriage. There are great glad tidings for pious Muslims with lesser financial means who intend marrying so that they can protect their deen and practice on the sunnat of Nabi s.a.w in the verse wherein Allaah says, "If they are poor, Allaah will make them independent out of his grace." (Surah Noor *v.32*)

Allaah will make them independent if they marry a pious woman (with the right intention.) There is also encouragement and guidance for people who have daughters or girls in their care not to refuse a proposal simply because it comes from a person who is not wealthy. Wealth is something that comes and goes. The real thing is piety.

Should this (piety) be found in a poor person, his proposal should not be refused.
Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas r.a says that Allaah has encouraged all Muslims, free or slaves, to get married in this verse, and he has also promised to grant those who marry independence.

Ibn Abi Haatim reports from Hadhrat Abu-Bakr Siddeeq r.a that he addressed the Muslims saying, **“Fulfill the command of Allaah of marriage so that he may fulfill his promise of independence.”** He then recited the verse where in Allaah says, “If they are poor Allaah will make them independent out of his grace.”

Abdullah Ibn Masood r.a has said, “If you people desire to be independent (wealthy), you should get married. For Allaah has said, ‘“If they are poor, Allaah will make them independent out of his grace.”’ (Ibn Kathir)

Rasulullaah s.a.w once said, “It is the duty of Allaah to assist three types of people,
1. A person who intends to abstain from haraam, and therefore gets married.
2. A slave who has made an agreement (with his master regarding his freedom) and intends fulfilling the terms of the agreement.
3. A soldier who fights in the path of Allaah. (Thirmizi)

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